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26 January 1984

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Briefing of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (HPSCI) Staff on the Central American Finding

1. Today, HPSCI staffers were briefed on the above subject by our Agency representatives. Following are lists of the HPSCI staffers and our briefers.

a. HPSCI staffers

Thomas K. Latimer, Staff Director
Michael O'Neil
James Bush
Steven Berry
Bernie Raimo
Richard Giza
David Addington

b. CIA personnel

Dewey Clarridge, C/LA/DDO
[redacted] O/Compt
[redacted] DC/IAD/SAG/DDO
[redacted] LD/OLL

2. The purpose of this briefing was to provide the HPSCI staff with an overview of the activities under the Central America Presidential Finding since the last meeting with the staff which took place in October 1983. This session would also serve as a prebrief for a hearing in front of the full Committee scheduled for 0930, 31 January 1984. In view of the policy questions which were raised by he staffers during this session, it was decided to have the State Department represented during the full Committee hearing. [redacted]

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3. FDN: Dewey Clarridge, C/LA/DDO, began the briefing with an overview of the activities of the FDN.

In late October, a big FDN operation took place in Ocotal where they seized temporary control of four or five of the ten barrios in the town, held them for about two hours, In November-early December, the FDN moved into Nueva Segobia in an attempt to choke off the main lines of communication.

The FDN has been down as far as La Laguna where they attacked a tank park. They were able to blow up one tank, but lost the elemeht of surprise when they were guided into the middle of Sandinista defenses, and were forced to withdraw before they could do any additional damage.

One of the mines exploded under a patrol boat, and we believe the other two were found and rendered inert. The object of the exercise was an attempt to discourage tankers from using the POL off-loading facility.

4. ARDE:

along the river who have rallied to ARDE and are crying for support. Until

15 December, ARDE was conducting operations. As of that date, ARDE ran into supply problems which effected operations, and there was a perceptible slackening of activity. Approximately ten days ago, Pastora ordered a complete stand-down on operations [redacted] The bottom line is that Pastora wants the "whole ball of wax" and wants to force us to recognize him as the unquestioned leader of the contra alliance. The Miskito, although in an alliance with ARDE, are still fighting in spite of Pastora's orders. [redacted] Robelio was supposed to meet with Collero last week, but this had to be postponed as a result of Pastora's antics. Collero and Donald Castillo, ARDE's representative in Mexico City, [redacted] plans to contin [redacted] ARDE is interested in the individual groups maintaining their identities, but operating under the umbrella political organization.

5. Miskito: As far as strengths are concerned, our figures are very soft. [redacted]

6. M-3 Movement: C/LA/DDO explained that this was a group which broke away from ARDE and is now operating in the south. Apparently, this group became disenchanted with Pastora's dictates. Pastora saw this group as a threat and did all he could to marginalize their activities. The FDN did supply M-3 with some money for food, [redacted]

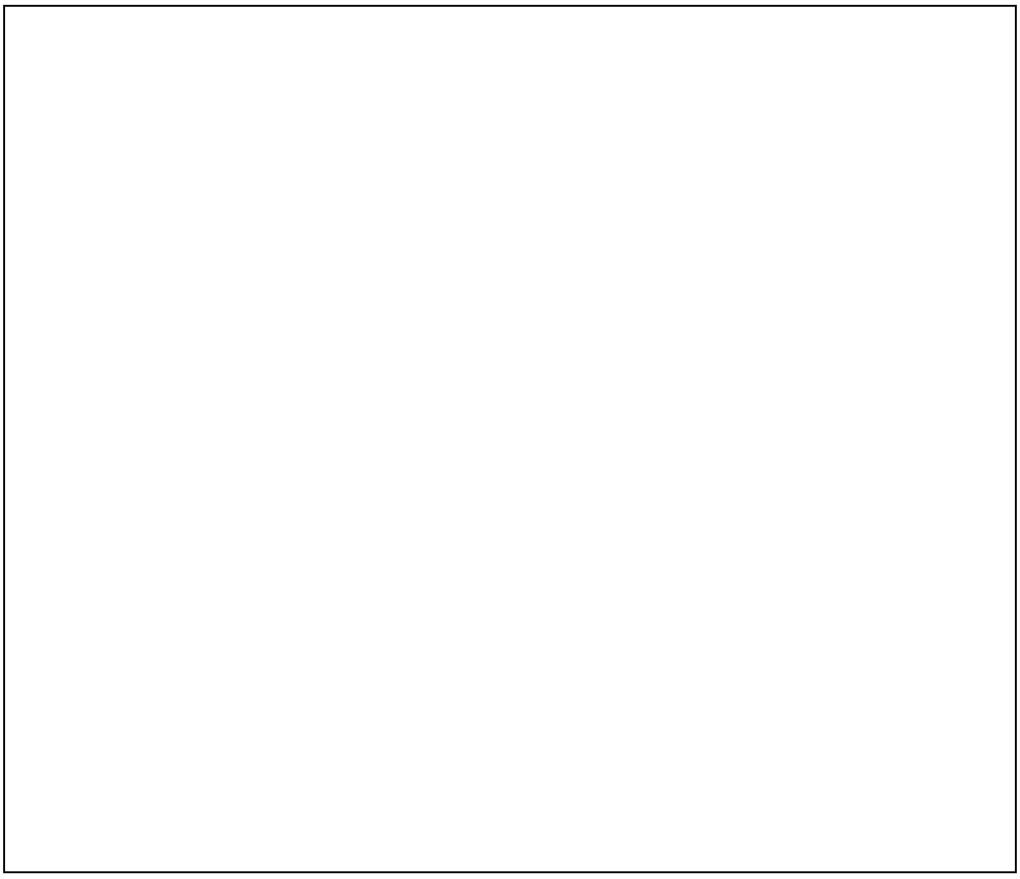
7. C/LA/DDO spent some time explaining the background for recent problems with Pastora. The bottom line is that Pastora's underlings want to move north and get on with convergence. Pastora sees this as a threat to his leadership [redacted]

[redacted]

8. El Salvador: In the opinion of C/LA/DDO, the government of El Salvador is truly trying to do something about the right-wing death squads. When Avila was picked up by the civilians for suspected death squad activities and was released, the military re-arrested him. In addition to taking action on the death squads, the military is now appointing good people to key positions. We have now seen the first instance of meritorious promotions, which is a dramatic development. There have also been instances where commanders were fired for incompetence. Recently a Lieutenant Colonel was given a brigade command with two Colonels serving as subordinates. A lot more needs to be done in the area of tactics, such as fighting at night. In order to improve dramatically, however, the Salvadorean Army needs assurances of constant military supplies. The on and off again supply system form the U.S. has a debilitating affect.

9. [redacted]

[redacted]



10. In response to a question concerning what intelligence we had

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c.

d. [redacted]

e. We are now hearing that the Sandinistas realize they may have to get along without the Cubans. In the opinion of C/LA/DDO, the Sandinistas at this stage could not survive without the Cubans unless the exiles were allowed to return and actively participate in the running of the government.

f. According to Secretary Schultz, the Mexicans have told the Sandinistas that the Soviet/Cuban presence in Nicaragua is unacceptable and the Americans would not leave the area until the Cubans were out. Mexico is an important player in the Central American situation. [redacted]

11. In making an oblique reference to [redacted] for this program and we depended on being alerted in sufficient time to procure what was needed. He went on to say we had a good idea of their usage rates and could usually plan ahead to fill their requirements.

12. Jim Bush also asked for projections on when we would run out of money, since only $24 million was authorized for the program in FY 1984. [redacted] C/LA/DDO responded that we would run out of money in May at current projections.

13. At this point, the subject switched to [redacted]

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Liaison Division
Office of Legislative Liaison

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